



A safe place to grow in turning
our lives 180 degrees
from ourselves to Christ and others

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June 2024

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JEFFREY SHARP TESTIMONY - Recovering My True Identity

A Tough Start to Life

I was born in 1954 in Galveston, Texas to my 13-year-old mom and my 23 year-old dad who had just returned from some of the worst battles of the Korean War. My dad worked at the oil refineries and my mom stayed home. When I was 6, we moved to the Dallas area and my dad went to work for the "Jack Ruby" and helped run his night clubs, strip clubs and other illegal activities like drugs and call girls. My father was always distant, but after moving to Dallas, he was regularly drunk and violent to my mom and me.

Moving Too Fast From Childhood to Adulthood

My mom was my best friend and would do anything for me. I loved art, drama, music, wild clothing, and hair. Not exactly the typical All American Texas boy. However, I have always been very tough and stubborn, a trait likely drawn from my mom. Once I got suspended for having hair that touched my shoulders. My mom bleached my hair white and used gel to

make it stick straight up and sent me back to school the next day and told me to tell them that my hair was not touching my shoulders anymore!

When I was 9, my brother was born. When I was 12, I had my first sexual encounter with an 18 year old boy. I was also drinking and smoking pot and I started attacking my father when he was drunk and violent. Shortly after, my parents divorced. I was running wild. At 17, I moved into my own apartment.

I have always been a very hard worker, paying my own way. After High School, I moved close to my mom and got my AA in Lubbock Texas in Behavioral Sciences and worked at a state school for the mentally ill. In 1975 I had my 21st birthday and my mom died of cancer. I moved back to Galveston continuing my work training kids from Group Homes and moved in with my girlfriend. One night she did something that upset me, I grabbed her by the hair and dragged her across the room. I broke up with her, because I was so afraid I was becoming like my dad. I decided I would no longer date women for the fear of doing that again.

My Spiritual Childhood

When I was five years old my mom and grandma took me to a Vacation Bible School and my heart was deeply touched and I decided I really wanted to be a shepherd just like Jesus! When I was 12, some friends from school took me to a church and my mom went too. During the altar call, I felt so anxious that I just had to go up to the front and give my life to Jesus. The next week I was baptized and when I went under the water, I truly believed I drowned and died, because I saw a white light for what seemed like an eternity while I was under the water. Jesus deeply touched me! I had relatives that were Baptists, Assembly of God, Pentecostal and my dad's dad was a pianist, who played at the Baptist Church his whole life. My mom and grandma would go to church occasionally, but for the most part we didn't. I really have always believed in Jesus, but my life was full of trying to fit into the wrong places and find my father's love.

My mother had always encouraged me to be creative and pursue my dreams. For a few years after her death, I worked hard and went crazy with drugs and extremely promiscuous behavior. My father died in 1980 and so at 26, I joined Circus Vargas.

Circus Vargas

I was a clown that rode the unicycle, did magic, walked the tightrope and loved working with the exotic animals. Shortly after joining the circus, they moved me into management positions, but I also thrived on doing daring acts that made people really focus on me and applaud. I even had a Superman act, where I would fly from the ground pulled on a cable high above the audience. One night it malfunctioned, and I fell 30 feet to the ground. The traveling circus family was about 175 people, which also included "The Little Sisters of Jesus" who were Catholic and worked some of the food booths to raise money for their Order and to care for themselves. They also did things like tending to people like me who had fallen 30 feet and broken their nose and their wrist and needed care. They held a mass on Sunday mornings that I would often attend, though I was also open to many other things like tarot cards, yoga, Buddhism and whatever else made me happy in the moment. Being in the circus exposed me to a great deal more debauchery, especially in the gay community, of which there were many in the circus.

Ticketmaster

After 4 years in the Circus, I liked the people and the excitement, but did not feel like I really fit in. I took a job with Ticketmaster and moved back to Galveston. I've always been drawn back to Galveston, because when I was a little boy my mom and grandma used to take me down to the beach and I have my most positive memories in that city. I realize that I have spent a lifetime trying to get back to that feeling of real love. For six years I helped that small startup Ticketmaster move to a monopoly in the US.

Rolling Stones Magazine

In 1986 I moved to New York City. I went to work for Rolling Stones magazine as the assistant to the vice president and as an editor for special projects. I was always looking for something new and exciting to do and New York was a pretty bad place to pursue that behavior. No matter how dark or lewd a behavior you can think of, I was engaged in it in New York City. After six years of working for Rolling Stones I had had enough of the hateful and pompous behavior of the management that made me do ugly things like firing pregnant women because they weren't allowed to work there.

Back to Waco Texas

I bought a 15 acre ranch in Texas on a lake to live a quieter life and went to work for Chase Bank. I have always been quite good with computers, so I oversaw the moving of the departments to a digital world and then ultimately sending that digital work to India. After everyone else had been fired or laid off, they gave me a two-year severance package. At 52 years old I could not find work.

Off to Palm Springs

My bosses from the circus had retired to Palm Springs and said I should come out and live there. I went to work at the casino and engaged fully in the gay lifestyle of Palm Springs, which by the way has just as many dark places as New York City!

Full Blown AIDS

In 2012 I became very sick and frail and was admitted to the hospital, where I remained for seven months with full blown AIDS. I was 58 years old and they told me I would probably never get out of the hospital. I refused to die there, so I took my oxygen and went home. It was a full year before I was strong enough to drive again and two years until I was off oxygen.

A New Beginning

In 2015 my cleaning lady introduced me to Kurt and David. (click here to see their Live180 testimonies (Kurt [2018 12 Nov-Dec Newsletter.pdf](#)) (David [2018 04 April Newsletter.pdf](#)). They were attending the Bible study at the restaurant on

Wednesday nights. I was intrigued. Then I was even more intrigued and joined them for breakfast and church at Our Savior's on Sunday mornings, where I met Pastor David.

My First Testimony

In 2018, Pastor David asked me to write a testimony of how Jesus was changing my life. ([2018_09_September_Newsletter.pdf](#)) I had not yet realized that being gay was not my true identity.

My True Identity

After time attending the Sunday Live 180 Bible study, and being loved unconditionally by the people there and reading the Bible myself, I came to the realization that I truly believed the Bible.

I came to realize that my true identity is a child of God and that the lie I had believed my whole life was clearly against God's Word.

I came to realize that I had lived a life always on show, trying to say the right things, to be the entertainment, to be accepted and allowing myself to be used.

I came to see the utter deception in my pride and in the lifestyle and culture I had accepted.

I came to see that if you're going to believe in Jesus, you can't just pick and choose from the Bible and do things your own way.

I came to the point where all I wanted was truth.

I came to know that love is wrapped up also in the fear of the Lord. Not a vengeful or punishing fear like my father, but rather a fear that believes that there are joys for living a life as God designed, and there are consequences for living an alternative life.

I have now found the true love and home in Christ that I have spent my whole life looking for.

In Conclusion

I had lived my life believing in Jesus but never experiencing the real joy of a relationship with Him. Recognizing this in myself, it has led me to a point where when I encounter people who consider themselves to be Christians, I ask them "do you believe the Bible?" "Are you willing to follow Jesus no matter what change might have to happen?" If they can not answer yes to those 2 questions, I just say "well I love you and Jesus loves you and I hope that your life goes well. It didn't go too well for me." If they answer yes to those 2 questions, then I say to them "you have to be willing to face your poor choices and change. You have to be willing to be ashamed of doing things that don't honor God. That doesn't mean that He is shaming you, but that you recognize that your behavior is shaming yourself."

I have come to realize that we all have to Live 180. Only a life that turns away from self-fulfillment and turns to God and others can be truly full of life and joy! It took me 68 years; I pray it doesn't take you that long!

Previous testimonies can be seen on our [website's newsletter tab](#).

I forgot to put this financial summary in the newsletter earlier this year. oops

4 YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Ministry Income	\$106,400	\$102,100	\$100,500	\$95,600
Benevolence Income *	\$24,500	\$11,600	\$3,500	\$8,100
# of Giving Partners	39	33	37	38
Expenses				
Pastor David, Ray Ray's Salaries/Taxes	\$66,100	\$56,700	\$50,500	\$43,100
Medical Insurance & Expenses	\$6,300	\$12,200	\$10,700	\$14,100
Expenses for auto, equipment, internet, materials, office, meetings, phone, software, training, website and misc...	\$27,800	\$32,200	\$31,600	\$45,200
Benevolence gifts to people in need	\$27,800	\$16,600	\$3,500	\$4,100
Total Expenses	\$128,000	\$117,700	\$96,300	\$106,500
Year End Operating Capital **	\$20,800	\$17,900	\$16,900	\$9,200
Year End Benvolence Fund Reserve	-\$3,300	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000

* Donations given specifically to help people in need

** We try to keep about 2 months expenses in Year End Operating Capital

View the Live 180 [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#).

Online – If you want to join the whole meeting some Sunday on Zoom, just email me and [I will send you the link](#). Our recorded [Bible Studies are online](#) on our website, if you wish to listen or pass them on to others. We also have a [phone app to download](#) that gives you on-the-go access to the Bible Studies.

HOW TO PRAY FOR US

- **Praise God That** – Jeffrey has come to a place in life of great peace and contentment in Christ.
- **That** – I will have some wonderful times with my family and friends as I travel North to Seattle this summer. 8 stops & 16 people.
- **That** – Andrea and I will have a relaxing and fruitful vacation in Seattle with her family. 18 people.

- **That** – God will lead Ray Ray in his next steps with his job and in life!
- **That** – the process of Probate for Glenn's home will continue to go smoothly and quickly. Looks like early 2025.

WE EXIST BECAUSE WE BELIEVE

- God wants all of us to live 180 degrees, that is, turning our eyes off ourselves and fixing them on Jesus and others.
- There are a large number of people in Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley who are uneasy about walking through the doors of a traditional church.
- There are others who are looking for a place without labels and a lot of love to grow in their faith walk with Jesus.
- These people are longing for the following things:
 - a safe place to meet one-on-one and in groups to talk honestly about God.
 - a relationship with God.
 - a place to use their gifts to serve God and others.
- That Holy Spirit will lead each of us closer to Him and to His church.

OUR MAILING ADDRESS

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Live 180 is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit. Donations are tax deductible. Checks can be made out to "Live 180." Online giving is available through our [website](#) and [phone app](#) as a one-time or ongoing gift.

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